

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated December 2, 2004, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration based on the following amendments and remarks. Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as presented are in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-11 are pending. Claims 1-11 have been rejected. Claims 1, 9, and 11 are independent claims from which claims 2-8, and 10 respectively depend. Claims 1, 3 and 9 have been amended. While Applicants do not agree with the grounds for rejection and responses to argument, in the interest of furthering prosecution, Applicants have amended the independent claims to more particularly point out the invention, which renders the stated grounds for rejection moot. Applicants respectfully submit that the claims, as amended, define over the prior art. No new matter has been added. Support for the amendments can be found in the application as filed on page 2, lines 9-21, page 10 lines 5-12 and elsewhere.

Claims 1-11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Williams et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,097,801). It is respectfully submitted that these claims are patentable for at least the reasons set forth below.

The instant application in FIG. 1 illustrates a telecommunications environment in which Number Pooling has been implemented. A Number Portability Administration Center (NPAC) 102 is communicatively coupled to Pooling Administration (PA) 104 and to Competitive Local Exchange Carrier 106, and to Local Number Portability (LNP) Gateway 108 of a service provider 150. PA 104 manages the donation and assignment of numbering blocks within the pool. NPAC 102 downloads location routing number (LRN) data to a database that supports the routing of telephone calls in North America. Telecommunication carriers connect to NPAC 102 to receive telephone number and LRN information.

When a block of numbers is donated to PA 104 by a donating service provider, a list of telephone numbers not available for use by a receiving service provider included within the donated block of numbers is provided to all service providers, as illustrated and described with reference to FIG. 2. NPAC 102 broadcasts the list of unavailable numbers to all service providers when the block of numbers is donated.

A service provider may request a block of numbers from the NPAC 102. When the donated block of numbers is released to the receiving service provider, as illustrated and

described with reference to FIG. 3, the NPAC broadcasts a message including the LRN of the donating service provider's switch but does not include the LRN of the receiving service provider's switch. As a result, components of at least the receiving service provider may not know the LRN of the switch to which the numbers available for use by the receiving service provider will be attached and will not know what numbers in the block are unavailable for use by the receiving service provider.

According to exemplary embodiments, methods and systems are provided for notifying components of a service provider of the correct LRN to be associated with a block of numbers received by a service provider and in which a list of unusable numbers contained within the received block of numbers are identified. For example, as illustrated in FIG. 4, an Order Management System (OMS) 108a is coupled to receiving service provider components such as Block Administration Center (BAC) 110, Customer Billing System (CBS) 112 and Facility Maintenance System (FMS) 114 and sends a message to the service components including an identification of unuseable numbers within a block of received numbers, and the LRN of the service provider that receives the block of numbers.

As illustrated and described with reference to FIG. 5, following the receipt of the NPAC message including the LRN of the donating service provider's switch but not including the LRN of the receiving service provider's switch, the OMS 108a retrieves a list of unuseable numbers contained within the received block from a database at the NPAC 102. The LRN to which the usable numbers within the block of numbers received will be associated is retrieved from the same or from a second database. The unusable number data and the receiving LRN to which the usable numbers will be associated may be sent to service provider components such as components BAC 110, CBS 112 and FMS 114.

In accordance with the above, Claim 1, for example, recites:

A method of notifying a component of a service provider comprising:
requesting a block of telephone numbers from a number pool organization, wherein numbers in the requested block of telephone numbers are to be used by a receiving service provider as both telephone directory numbers and customer identifiers for customers of the receiving service provider, wherein the number pool organization coordinates donation and allocation of blocks of telephone numbers for

use by a plurality of service providers comprising the receiving service provider and other service providers;

receiving the requested block of telephone numbers from the number pool organization, the received block of telephone numbers comprising a plurality of telephone numbers already in use by the other service providers and a plurality of telephone numbers not already in use by the other service providers;

retrieving from a database a list comprising the plurality of telephone numbers already in use by the other service providers and therefore unavailable for use as both telephone directory numbers and customer identifiers for customers of the receiving service provider; and

retrieving from a database, a location routing number of a switch associated with the plurality of telephone numbers not already in use by the other service providers and therefore available for use by the receiving service provider as both telephone directory numbers and customer identifiers for customers of the first service provider.

(emphasis added).

Williams does not disclose or suggest at least the italicized features of Applicant's claim 1. The Williams reference is directed to a method of providing number portability for correctly routing calls from a calling party to a ported number of a called party. As described in Williams in column 4, lines 40-56, this is done by receiving the digits dialed by the calling party at a switching office serving the calling party, determining if the dialed digits are associated with a ported number, if they are, getting a routing option, establishing a signaling path by creating an Initial Address Message and receiving the message at the terminating exchange. Williams is also directed to providing number portability for calls from a calling party to a portable number, in which a second switch is consulted for determining whether the dialed digits are associated with a portable number. Hence, Williams is not directed to the same problem and thus does not disclose or need to consider any of the italicized features of claim 1.

Because Williams fails to disclose every feature of claim 1, claim 1 is considered allowable over Williams. Hence, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is patentable, as

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are claims 2-8 which depend therefrom. Independent claims 9 and 11 recite analogous features and thus claims 9, 11 and the claims that depend therefrom are patentable for the reasons described above. Withdrawal of the rejections of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) is earnestly requested.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application and an early Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested.

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